

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 NEA-10 ISO-00 L-03 FRB-01 OMB-01 TAR-01

SP-02 AGR-10 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 OIC-02 SIL-01 STR-04 TRSE-00 CIEP-02

CEA-01 INT-05 /086 W

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P R 160247Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9683

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS BANGKOK 16969

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:ESCAP:BEXP

SUBJ: RED:ESCAP:FIRST AGREEMENT ON TRADE NEGOTIATIONS AMONG  
ESCAP LDCS

REF: STATE 191251

1. SUMMARY: ASIA'S FIRST AGREEMENT FOR LIBERALIZED TRADE AMONG  
ESCAP MEMBER LDCS SIGNED BY SIX MEMBER COUNTRIES JULY 31 IN BANGKOK  
AFTER MONTH-LONG NEGOTIATIONS. AGREEMENT CONTAINING 39 ARTICLES  
FIRST EFFORT PROVIDES FOR CONTINUING PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS UNDER  
ESCAP AUSPICES DESIGNED TO BROADEN CURRENT RANGE OF CONCESSIONS  
ON 160 COMMODITIES INVOLVING APPROXIMATELY 50 MILLION DOLLARS  
IN TRADE BETWEEN PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY.

2. ASIA'S FIRST AGREEMENT FOR LIBERALIZED TRADE BETWEEN DEVELOPING  
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COUNTRIES SIGNED IN BANGKOK JULY 31 BY SIX ESCAP MEMBER COUNTRIES

VIZ. INDIA, LAOS, PHILIPPINES, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, SRI LANKA AND THAILAND. BANGLADESH SIGNED AUGUST 15. BANGKOK AGREEMENT (BA) OF 39 ARTICLES PROVIDES FOR ONGOING PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS DESIGNED TO WIDEN RANGE OF 160 COMMODITIES AND PRODUCTS CURRENTLY OFFERED BY AGREEMENT. TOTAL IMPORTS OF COMMODITIES COVERED BY BA HAVE VALUE OF 650 MILLION DOLLARS REPRESENTING FOUR PERCENT TOTAL IMPORTS ALL COMMODITIES BY SIGNATORY COUNTRIES. TOTAL IMPORTS COVERED BY BA FROM TNG EVEN SMALLER VIZ. 50 MILLION DOLLARS OR LESS THAN ONE PERCENT ALL IMPORTS ALL SOURCES. TRADE CONCESSIONS RANGE UP TO 80 PERCENT WITH AVERAGE TARIFF CUT AROUND 30 PERCENT. EXAMPLES OF COMMODITIES/PRODUCTS FOLLOW UNDER FOUR CATEGORIES VIZ. FOOD, MANUFACTURES CHEMICALS AND MINERALS.  
FOOD: SUGAR, FISH, COCONUT OIL, BEANS  
MANUFACTURES: SPARE PARTS FOR LOCOMOTIVES AND RAILWAY ROLLING STOCK, TIRES, TUBES AND SOME APPLIANCES  
CHEMICALS: DYES  
MINERALS: UNWROUGHT TIN, GYPSUM, CRUDE SULPHUR

3. MSA AND LLDCS ARE GIVEN PARTICULAR ATTENTION BY CLAUSE AUTHORIZING SPECIAL ADVANTAGEOUS CONCESSIONS. OTHER ARTICLES ALLOW FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEE, SUPPORT THE FORMATION OF SUB-REGIONAL TRADING ARRANGEMENTS, REQUESTS RELAXATION OF QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS TO TRADE, ESTABLISH PREFERENCE LISTS, PROVIDE FOR TRADE EXPANSION PARTICULARLY AMONG ESCAP LDCS AND MSA AND PROVIDE FOR MULTILATERAL CONSULTATION WHEN DISPUTES ARISE.

4. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MARAMIS NOTED AT BA SIGNING CEREMONY THAT AGREEMENT HAS NO POLITICAL AIMS AND DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR CREATION OF CUSTOMS UNION. HE QUALIFIED STATEMENT BY COMMENTING THAT BA COULD BE SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARD FUTURE CREATION OF ASIAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OR AT LEAST ASIAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION.

5. COMMENT: RED AND OTHER ESCAP DEVELOPED REGIONAL AND NON-REGIONAL MEMBERS INFORMED BY SECRETARIAT IN TURN THAT BA WAS UNAVAILABLE AS WAS FULL LIST OF 160 COMMODITIES AND PRODUCTS. THUS ONLY CURRENTLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION IN FORM OF CORRIDOR COMMENTARY AND PRESS RELEASES. MARIAMIS' SPECIAL ASSISTANT INFORMED THAT ONLY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY COULD RELEASE TEXT OF BA AND HE ON EXTENDED LEAVE IN INDONESIA. OTHER CRYPTIC COMMENTS BY SECRETARIAT STAFF THIS ISSUE INDICATED THAT WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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SPECIAL ESCA DOCUMENTATION WOULD BE REQUIRED. IN RED JUDGMENT THIS MERELY ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF CREEPING DEFENSIVENESS OF SECRETARIAT INSPIRED BY GROUP 77 AND EFFORTS AT ESTABLISHING NIEO. EMBASSY ATTEMPTING OBTAIN COPY OF BA THROUGH RTG SOURCES.

6. CONSIDER THIS INTERIM RESPONSE. WILL ADVISE WHEN BA AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION AVAILABLE.  
WHITEHOUSE

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## Message Attributes

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